

Health Advisory:

Animal Rabies in Missouri

May 31, 2005

This document will be updated as new information becomes available. The current version can always be viewed at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov>

The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) is now using 4 types of documents to provide important information to medical and public health professionals, and to other interested persons:

Health Alerts convey information of the highest level of importance which warrants immediate action or attention from Missouri health providers, emergency responders, public health agencies, and/or the public.

Health Advisories provide important information for a specific incident or situation, including that impacting neighboring states; may not require immediate action.

Health Guidances contain comprehensive information pertaining to a particular disease or condition, and include recommendations, guidelines, etc. endorsed by DHSS.

Health Updates provide new or updated information on an incident or situation; can also provide information to update a previously sent Health Alert, Health Advisory, or Health Guidance; unlikely to require immediate action.

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Health Advisory
May 31, 2005

FROM: JULIA M. ECKSTEIN
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SUBJECT: Animal Rabies in Missouri

An unusually high number of rabid animals have been detected so far this year in Missouri. As of May 23, 2005, 18 animals have tested positive for rabies, compared to six animals for the same time period last year. (The total number of rabid animals detected in 2004 was 62 percent greater than the average annual total for the preceding ten-year period.) The 2005 cases include nine bats, eight skunks, and one horse. All rabid skunks so far this year have been found in the southern one-half of the state, with three of them occurring in Howell County. A single rabid bat has been found in St. Louis City and in four other counties (Buchanan, Jackson, Boone, and Iron Counties). In addition, four rabid bats have been found to date in St. Louis County. The rabid horse was detected in Douglas County; five persons are undergoing the rabies prophylaxis as a result of this incident.

Veterinarians, medical providers, and public health officials should be alert to potential cases of animal rabies, and possible human exposures, in their area and know how to respond appropriately. The following key documents provide important information on rabies prevention, testing, and reporting.

References

1. *Reporting Communicable, Environmental and Occupational Diseases*. 19CSR20-20.020. <http://www.sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/19csr/19c20-20.pdf>
2. *Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, 2005*. National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, Inc., Topeka, KS. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5403a1.htm>
3. *Rabies Testing*. Missouri State Public Health Laboratory, Jefferson City, MO. www.dhss.mo.gov/Lab/Virology/RabiesTesting.html
4. *Human Rabies Prevention – United States, 1999, Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00056176.htm>

The following provides additional rabies information:

1. *Rabies Surveillance*, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Jefferson City, MO. <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/Rabies>
2. *Rabies Home Page*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies>
3. *Protection Against Rabies*, Missouri Revised Statutes, Chapter 322. <http://www.moga.state.mo.us/statutes/c322.htm>

Rabies in both animals and humans is reportable to the local public health agency, or to the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) at 1-800-392-0272.

Rabies consultation for medical providers and veterinarians is also available from DHSS at 1-800-392-0272.